



Wyoming Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM NO. 2009-ARRA3

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Jim McBride, Ed.D.

DATE: March 23, 2009

SUBJECT: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act information - 3

For Your Information

Hopefully, since last week some of you have had the opportunity to review the guidance that was distributed by the U.S. Department of Education. Below is a quick synopsis of the timeline and key points of the funds. In addition, there are some options that are being explored for use of the money at the district level.

The primary fund streams that are being handled at this time are the Title I, IDEA and State Fiscal Stabilization Funds. The timeline for these funds to begin flowing to the states is the end of March to mid April, although only about 50 percent of the funds will be released at that time. The second half will be released on specific conditions and reporting that will be established by the U.S. Department of Education in the fall.

The funds tied to Impact Aid Construction and Education for Homeless will be released in full by the end of March, but Wyoming is not likely to see a substantial dollar amount in either of those areas.

Title I School Improvement Grants and Education Technology Grants, as well as other competitive grants such as Teacher Incentive Fund, Teacher Quality Enhancement and Statewide Data Systems will not be available until sometime in the fall of 2009. Guidance is expected to come out in early fall on these funds as well.

One of the priorities of my stimulus oversight team has been the development of a suggested list of uses. We are aware that the use of all these funds will be heavily scrutinized by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Congress but also by the Wyoming Legislature, the Governor's Office and the media. That is why we are working diligently to develop a list of good uses that will impact student achievement and support your schools.

To that end, here is a list of uses that we have been brainstorming about. We welcome your feedback on these items, as well as any ideas you might have. The ideas are still broad-based discussions but we will be developing more detailed, concentrated ideas in the weeks to come.

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability

- Vocational education pilots
- Develop or expand the capacity to collect and use data to improve teaching and learning
- Additional materials that supplement the current Title I programs for reading and math
- Programs for English language learners
- Developing classroom and formative assessments to inform instruction that will help close the achievement gap

Professional Development

- Provide intensive district-wide professional development for special education and regular education teachers that focuses on scaling-up through replication, proven innovative evidence based school-wide strategies in reading, math, writing, and science and positive behavioral supports to improve outcomes for students with disabilities
- Programs for teacher coaching and mentoring

Personnel

- A district certified staff evaluation consortium
- A district leadership consortium
- Consider signing bonuses for hard to fill positions, typically related service providers
- High quality, intensive professional development that is sustainable
- Making improvements in teacher effectiveness and in the equitable distribution of qualified teachers for all students, particularly students who are most in need
- Cohesive leadership system development

Support Program

- Consider supporting the continuing education of individuals who may be able to become licensed or certified in identified areas of need, i.e. Speech Language Therapist, Speech Therapy Assistant, etc
- Extended learning programs such as before and after school and Saturday school opportunities
- Summer School
- Parent Involvement and professional development
- Family Literacy Services

- Developing programs or training on transitioning PK students for Kindergarten readiness

Technology

- Consider assistive technology (AT) devices and provide training on their uses to enhance access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities
- Additional technology, computers, data systems to track student progress
- Expansion of WEN infrastructure

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